



PRESS RELEASE

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CHP: DON'T PUSH YOUR LUCK BEHIND THE WHEEL

CHP is working to reduce the increasing number of DUI arrests on St. Patrick's Day

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – While many Californians will be enjoying festivities on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) will be working hard to keep them safe. The number of arrests for driving under the influence (DUI) increased in recent years, which can be avoided this year if people plan ahead to get home safely by designating a sober driver or calling for a ride before they start celebrating.

On St. Patrick's Day in 2014, the CHP made 489 DUI arrests; 430 in 2013, and 300 in 2012. The CHP encourages celebrants to get home safely by designating a non-drinking driver before their festivities begin or by making other plans, such as learning if their community has a sober ride program.

"Our officers will be watching for impaired drivers, to keep everyone safe. Designate a sober driver. Plan ahead to protect your life, your vehicle, and your friends," said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow.

"As you make all the plans for celebrating St. Patrick's Day, don't forget the most important plan," said Rhonda Craft, Director of the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS). "Plan ahead for your designated sober driver. Friend, family member, taxi, or ride share are all good choices to make it home safely."

The CHP, Office of Traffic Safety, and the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) recommend a few simple tips:

- Before the celebrations begin, plan a way to get home safely at the end of the party.
- Designate a sober driver and leave your car keys at home.
- Use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation to get home safely.
- Use your community's sober ride program if there is one.
- If you are walking home, be sure to have a sober companion with you.
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, call 9-1-1. You could save a life.
- If you know people who are about to drive a vehicle or motorcycle while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements.

NHTSA estimates that nationally, alcohol-impaired motor vehicle collisions cost more than \$37 billion annually.

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